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BIDEN SOLIDIFIES VICTORY IN US PREZ RACE WITH GEORGIA WIN

President-elect Joe Biden has won Georgia, major US outlets have projected, bringing the 2020 presidential race to a close

RARE TRIUMPH IN REPUBLICAN BASTION

After Bill Clinton in 1992, Biden is the first Democratic nominee to triumph in Georgia, as per the projections by CNN. The former vice-president has struck at the heart of what has been a Republican presidential stronghold for nearly three decades, it said. According to NBC News, Biden's margin in his apparent victory over Trump in the state was 14,152 votes | P9

REPUBLICANS FACE COURT SETBACKS

- Upholding the three-day extension in view of the pandemic, a court rejected the Republican Party's efforts to block 9,300 mail-in ballots that arrived after Election Day in Pennsylvania
- The Trump campaign has filed more than 15 legal challenges in Pennsylvania, seeking to reclaim the state's 20 electoral votes

306

ELECTORAL VOTES BAGGED BY BIDEN ARE JUST AS MANY AS TRUMP'S IN 2016 POLLS

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A TRADITION OF DIWALI WITH SOLDIERS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been celebrating Diwali with soldiers at forward posts since 2014. He was in Rajouri last year, in Uttarakhand in 2018, and in Gurez in 2017. "It is important that the coming generations know about the bravery with which our soldiers and security forces ensured that India is safe from the evil designs of those who eyed our territory," Modi tweeted.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi rides on an Army tank at the Longewala Post in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, on Saturday | PTI

PM: IF TESTED, INDIA WILL GIVE 'PRACHAND JAWAB'

Greeting soldiers, Modi gives veiled warning to hostile neighbours

RAJESH ASNANI @ Jaipur

DELIVERING an unambiguous message to India's enemies, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday asserted that the country will give a "prachand jawab" (fierce reply) if provoked, as he flew to Longewala Post in Rajasthan's Jaisalmer district to celebrate Diwali with soldiers, a tradition he has been following since assuming office in 2014.

Modi addressed soldiers at the historic Longewala post, which is the stuff of military legend after troops here successfully thwarted numerically higher Pakistani forces in the 1971 war. He said that there will be no compromise when it comes to border security. Without naming China, he targeted the neighbouring country for its expansionist policy, saying it exposes a "distorted mindset" that belongs to the 18th century. India has become a voice against forces of expansionism, he said, taking an aim at Pakistan. Indian soldiers have hit "sponsors of terrorism" in their home, referring to air and surgical strikes against terror camps in the neighbouring country.

"I have brought the greetings and love of every Indian to you. All of you are entitled to a lot of respect. In 2014, I went to Siachen after becoming the Prime Minister to celebrate Diwali and many people were surprised. One visits their loved ones on Diwali. That is why even today, I have come among my family members. Whether you live in the snowy hills or in the desert, seeing the glow on your faces makes my Diwali auspicious," the PM said.

"No force in the world can prevent our brave soldiers from defending our borders. The world today knows that we will not compromise with our interests even one bit at any cost," he said. P7

(With inputs from PTI)

Not a happy Deepavali for SRTC staffers

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@ Bengaluru/Belagavi

NOT everyone is celebrating Deepavali this year. Close to 1.5 lakh employees working with four state road transport corporations (SRTCs) have not got their salaries on time since March when the Covid-19 pandemic broke out.

The KSRTC Union had requested the State Government to pay at least a part of the salary so that the employees could celebrate the festival of lights. But the amount was not sanctioned. Since the salaries were not cleared on Saturday, the employees will not be paid till Tuesday, as the banks are closed till then. Recently, SRTCs had asked the government to release Rs 634 crore to pay the salaries till December.

Mahesh (name changed), a KSRTC driver, said that before March, employees got their salaries on the first of every month. "Now, we are paid between 15th and 20th of every month. We have families and other expenses. So, we end up taking loans from friends and financiers," he said. P5

IT City rides Aatmanirbhar wave, eyes $300bn by 2025

BISMAH MALIK @Bengaluru

INDIA's Silicon Valley, Bengaluru, is undergoing a makeover from a software services exporter to a product development hub, as global firms set foot in the city. Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister Dr C N Ashwath Narayan believes that the Aatmanirbhar (self-reliance) policy pronounced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be the foundation on which this transformation takes place.

"From an IT services exporters hub, we are now an attractive destination for product development," Narayan told *TNSE* in an exclusive interaction. He underlined the importance of R&D, resources, manpower and regulatory support for overseeing this transformation.

He said the state is aiming at a $300-billion digital market by 2025 on the back of Aatmanirbhar. Various initiatives, including Karnataka Digital Economy Mission, Vision Group for Startups, state's ESDM policy, Beyond Bengaluru tech development and a supportive regulatory framework will help achieve this mission. "We expect to contribute at least 30% to the country's target of achieving a $1-trillion economy by 2025," he stated. CONTINUED ON: P10

Deputy CM Dr C N Ashwath Narayan at an interaction at the TNIE office in Bengaluru on Saturday | SHRIRAM BN

Draft OFC policy out soon, says Deputy CM

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THE state IT&BT Department is coming up with a draft optical fibre cable (OFC) policy in coordination with the Urban Development and Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Departments to improve internet connectivity across the state.

Under the new policy, the single-window system will be introduced which will allow service providers to get all required approvals at one place, said Deputy Chief Minister and Information Technology and Biotechnology Minister Dr C N Ashwath Narayan. P10

EXPRESS READ

ED Director's tenure extended by one year

New Delhi: The Centre has extended the tenure of ED Director Sanjay Kumar Mishra by a year after modifying his 2018 appointment order. P7

Delhi's air quality 'severe' on Diwali

New Delhi: Delhi's air quality turned "severe" on Diwali with stubble burning accounting for 32 per cent of the city's PM2.5 pollution, officials said. P7

happy Deepavali

Embrace the child in you!

What's the fondest memory of a festival in your childhood? The delicacies, new clothes, the laughter shared among cousins amidst all the chaos, the vibrant home and above everything, the joy of being together! All of these were felt because you were present at the moment. And truly present.

This Deepavali, may we relish every moment, cherish our loved ones, celebrate the little things, express gratitude, experience causeless happiness, look to the future with hope renewed and relearn the art of being present. Truly.

Follow and tag me in your happy moments and stand a chance to win surprise gifts from me!

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- Dr. KVS, Chairman